

MAHATHIR - BANK

83 (P) 26
KUALA LUMPUR, JUNE 12 (BERNAMA)-- THE GOVERNMENT HOPES TO FINALISE THE DRAFTING OF LEGISLATION FOR THE PROPOSED ISLAMIC BANK TO ENABLE A BILL FOR ITS IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT TO BE TABLED IN TIME FOR THE NEXT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

+WE HOPE TO SET IT UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS HERE AFTER OPENING THE FIRST MEETING OF THE REGIONAL ISLAMIC QAKWAH COUNCIL OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC.

THE PRIME MINISTER ASSURED THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ISLAMIC BANK WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE COUNTRY'S EXISTING BANKING SYSTEM.

THE COMMITTEE STUDYING THE BANK'S ESTABLISHMENT, CHAIRED BY THE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER, RAJA TAN SRI MOHAR BIN RAJA BADIOZAMAN, HAD WORKED OUT THE DRAFT LEGISLATION AND WAS NOW MAKING VARIOUS NECESSARY ALTERATIONS.

TOUCHING ON THE BANK IN HIS SPEECH EARLIER, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MUSLIMS IN THE REGION HAD SHOWN INTEREST IN USING ITS SERVICES.

+WE WILL TRY OUR BEST TO ENSURE THAT THE BANKING FACILITY WILL BE ABLE TO BENEFIT AS MANY MUSLIMS AS POSSIBLE,+ HE ADDED.

--BERNAMA 1120/AH